

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-7 and 9-23 are now present in this application.

The claims 1, 9, 14, 15 and 22 have been amended, claims 2 and 8 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claim 23 has been presented. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Election of Species Requirement

The Examiner has deemed the prior election as being proper and made it final. However, independent claim 1 should now be generic to all embodiments except those wherein the hole of the heel is a blind-hole instead of a through-hole. However, independent claim 13 is generic for other embodiments, and also includes this blind-hole embodiment. Claim 13 would also be readable on an embodiment wherein the hole of the heel is a through-hole. As such, all embodiments should now be claimed. Independent claims 1, 13 and newly presented claim 23 should be in condition for allowance and, as such, the election of species requirement should now be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 USC 112

Claims 15, 16 and 22 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In view of the foregoing amendments, it is respectfully submitted that the claims should particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the present invention. As such, it

is respectfully requested that the 35 USC 112, second paragraph rejection now be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 USC 102(b)

Claims 1, 5, 6, 20 and 21 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Jackson, U.S. Patent 5,695,409. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges that the Examiner considers claim 8 to contain allowable subject matter and that claims 13, 14, 18 and 19 are allowed subject matter. Because the limitations of claim 8 have been incorporated into claim 1, this independent claim should be in condition for allowance. Independent claim 23 includes limitations similar to allowable claim 1 except the hole being a through-hole is not recited. Independent claim 13, newly presented independent claim 23 and all dependent claims should also now be in condition for allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that the 35 USC 102(b) rejection now be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

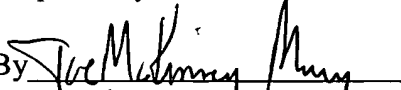
Application No.: 10/674,490

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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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